



7. Appendix A: Public Process

Introduction

As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the Southwest is an ever-evolving neighborhood. At the onset of any planning process, especially one in such a dynamic place, it is crucial to lay the foundation for new planning in past experiences and existing knowledge. The Southwest Waterfront Development Plan and the AWI Southwest Waterfront Vision build upon a number of earlier and current planning initiatives, including the planning efforts listed below. Further, the planning process that informed the creation of the Southwest Waterfront Development Plan and the AWI Southwest Waterfront Vision was informed at every step by feedback from neighborhood residents, local businesses, government agencies, and technical experts. This comprehensive and collaborative planning process has produced a better plan than any one party could create.

Previous Planning Efforts

Anacostia Waterfront Initiative

The vision for the Southwest Waterfront is an integral component of the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative (AWI). Simultaneous efforts to activate the District's waterfront, enhance public spaces, create cultural destinations, and build strong waterfront neighborhoods are underway along the Anacostia. The Southwest Waterfront is linked to the AWI in its shared visions and principles, and by the physical connections to surrounding neighborhoods.

1997 National Capital Planning Commission Legacy Plan

Extending the Legacy

In 1997, the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) released a comprehensive, long-term plan for the District Core. *Extending the Legacy: Planning America's Capital for the 21st Century* redefines Washington's Monumental Core by creating opportunities for new museums, memorials, and federal office buildings in all quadrants of the city. The Legacy Plan expands the reach of public transit and eliminates obsolete freeways, bridges, and railroad tracks. The plan emphasizes creating spaces for the public enjoyment of Washington's historic waterfront, which includes enhancing public promenades, creating connections to the water, and supporting mixed-use

waterfront development, highlighting the potential for visionary development in the Southwest to redefine the District's relationship to its waterfront. The Legacy Plan focuses on South Capitol Street and M Street as key commercial corridors and connectors between neighborhoods and the water.

Memorials and Museums Plan

The "Joint Task Force" of NCPC, the Commission of Fine Arts, and the National Capital Memorial Commission are responsible for the location and design of new commemorative works on federal land. Congress directed the NCPC, in conjunction with the Joint Task Force, to develop the Memorials and Museums Master Plan (adopted September 2001), which identifies prime sites for future museums and memorials throughout the District. The plan highlights the 10th Street Overlook at the Southwest Waterfront as a "Prime Site" for a museum or memorial of national significance because of its high visibility and strong axial relationship with the National Mall and thus other national monuments and buildings. The Memorials and Museums Plan also identifies additional sites on the Southwest Waterfront as potential sites for future museums and memorials, including the terminus of M Street at the Washington Channel.

1998 ULI Study

In 1997, the Urban Land Institute (ULI) conducted an extensive study focusing on the potential redevelopment of Waterside Mall and the Southwest Waterfront. The results of the study, published in 1998, recommend adding significant restaurant and retail space to the waterfront, re-envisioning Water Street as a pedestrian friendly connector to the existing neighborhood, and re-opening 4th Street at the Waterside Mall. The ULI plan additionally emphasized the development of new housing throughout the neighborhood, and the upgrading of existing residential buildings.

Light Rail Study

The District Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) are currently studying the feasibility of a light rail and express bus service in the District that includes potential alignments along the Southwest Waterfront. The proposed light rail would operate within existing street right of ways and could connect to the Waterfront on Seventh, Ninth, or Twelfth Street, and then continue along Maine Avenue and M Street to the Near Southeast and the rest of the Anacostia waterfront.



FIGURE 7.A1
1997 NCPC Legacy Plan



FIGURE 7.A2
1998 ULI Study



Public Process

December 2001 Workshops

The planning team worked closely with the residents, businesses, and government agencies affected by the potential redevelopment of the Southwest Waterfront throughout the planning process. This extensive outreach process began in December of 2001, with a two-day series of stakeholder discussion groups on December 5th and 6th, held at St. Matthew's Church and Southeastern University. The purpose of these public "listening" sessions was to kick-off and develop a guiding direction for the planning process for the Southwest Waterfront. Sessions were well-attended by all targeted stakeholders: those who live, work, and play near and on the Washington Channel, local business owners, and those involved in area cultural and non-profit institutions.

December's workshops concluded in a public presentation that outlined a set of planning principles developed over the course of the listening sessions. These principles formed the foundation of the planning process over the following months.

February 2002 Public Meeting

On February 27, 2002, over 300 members of the public came to St. Augustine's Church to give the planning team feedback on the preliminary plan for the development of the Southwest Waterfront. The planning team presented their analysis of the existing conditions of the site, the core assumptions behind the proposed plan, and recommended directions for the Southwest Waterfront Development Plan.

A principal concern discussed by community members attending the presentation regarded the proposed 3-4 story townhouses on development Site 6, the current parking area for the cruise ship operations. Many community members expressed concerns that housing on this site would block residents' views and limit their access to the Washington Channel. The planning team worked over the next four months to review the plan and incorporate this and other community feedback that emerged at the February public meeting.

July 2002 Public Meeting

The planning team returned to St. Augustine's Church on July 22, 2002, to present the revised Southwest Waterfront Development Plan and the AWI Vision for the Southwest Waterfront and to receive further community feedback. Over 250 community members attended the public meeting and many shared their comments and concerns in the discussion following the presentation. Community members were pleased with the removal of housing from development Site 6, but expressed further concerns about views and traffic at the southern end of the project area. Many community members also stressed the importance of maintaining affordable housing in the neighborhood. Over the next two months, the planning team worked to integrate community feedback from the July public meeting into the Development Plan and AWI Vision, forming the basis for the recommendations detailed in this report.

Outreach Programs

In addition to the large public meetings in December of 2001 and February and July of 2002, the planning team conducted extensive one-on-one outreach with local businesses, residents, and community groups. These meetings included multiple discussions with all local business owners, numerous meetings with local residential associations, and day-to-day response to the questions and concerns of community members. These ongoing outreach efforts served to keep the planning team aware of the concerns of the businesses and residents of the Southwest at each decision-point in the planning process.

Southwest Waterfront Planning Principles

- Build on existing neighborhood strengths
- Consolidate land resources
- Coordinate with other on-going planning efforts
- Support efforts to improve environmental quality
- Ensure a range of access options
- Enhance connections from neighborhood to waterfront
- Improve public access to the water itself
- Extend continuous, well-defined trail links along the Channel
- Provide a generous public water's edge promenade
- Create new public places along the waterfront
- Create neighborhood setting with appropriate scale and density
- Relate to the larger urban context
- Integrate parking in urban form
- Create varied and appealing architecture



FIGURE 7.A3
Public Workshops



FIGURE 7.A4
Public Workshops